

A

REVIEW

OF THE

STATE

OF THE

BRITISH NATION.

Thursday, September 2. 1708.

AND what will the *French* do next, is the Question now in every Body's Mouth? — *Lisfe* is besieg'd, and the Prosecution of the Siege so well secur'd, that there is no more question of its being taken, it is no more disputed at *Paris* than it is at *London* — But what will the *French* do next is the Word? And in answering this Question, you must give me leave to make the *French* at least as big, as we have good Reason to believe they really are, whether you like it or no; and in order to this, you must permit me to surmise two Things.

1. If the Duke *De Vendosme* and the Duke of *Borwick* are joyn'd, they will be much more numerous than the Duke of *Marlborough*, who leaves at least

40000 Men with Prince *Eugene* to carry on the Siege; and if we reckon the Troops left to secure *Brussels*, *Antwerp*, and the many Places in *Dutch-Flanders*, such as *Damme*, *Sluys*, *Hulst*, *Issendyke*, *Sas-Port-Ghent*, &c. with the Troops detach'd under the Command of Lieutenant-Generals *Fagel* and *Murray*, which are above 20000, the Duke of *Marlborough* cannot then be supposed to be above 60000 Men.

2. With this Army the Duke of *Marlborough* has two difficult Tasks to do, I mean, take them together, (*viz.*) Cover the Siege, and protect the open Country of *Brabant* with the *Dutch-Flanders*.

If the *French* joyn and face the Duke of *Marlborough*, and are perhaps 20000 Men superiour to him in Number, we shall not suppose it is his Business to fight them, but to keep them from insulting Prince *Eugene* in his Camp: But how he shall then prevent their falling upon the *Dutch* Frontiers, I do not really see, unless he can bring them to a Battle, which they will not be so drunk to be forced to a second Time, unless quite given up to their own Infatuations, and forsaken of all their usual Politicks.

Upon this I readily own, according to what the common Artifice of some is willing to make the best of, *viz.* That the D. of *Marlborough* has a very difficult Game to play; at the same time, I shall not grant, as they would insinuate, that he is not Gamester enough to play it; I hope, he has a Cause and a Guide that will carry him thro' all the Difficulties that are before him. But of that by it self.

But what now if the *French* should not joyn, but rather separate yet farther? What if their grand Army should march back behind their Lines to *Bruges*; which they can do in Cover, and so as not to be attack'd? — And from thence taking their Way lower, lie between *Newport* and *Ipres*, from whence they might, if the Duke of *Marlborough* offer'd to stir the other way, insult the Siege when they pleas'd — And being strengthened, upon any Emergence, with the Garrisons of *Newport*, *Dunkirk*, *Ipres*, and *St. Omar*, which are all numerous, would be very strong.

During this March, what would the D. of *Marlborough* do? Say our Politicians, it is plain what he would do; he would march back and face them, and lie between the Camp and them to cover the Siege — And be ready to fight them upon the first Offer.

Well, but then Gentlemen, what shall the Duke of *Berwick* do? Who lying now at *Mons*, with the Troops he has drawn out of the Neighbouring Garrisons, is, as they say, near 40000 strong; with these he is left wholly at Liberty to insult *Brussels* and *Lovain*, and all the open Country of *Brabant*, and push into the *Dutch* Frontiers, even to the Gates of *Bergen-op-Zoom*; or

to be a little farther off, he may march higher up to *Liege*, which he will take presently, and may then raise Contributions to the Gates of *Nimeguen* and *Maestricht*.

And now, Gentlemen, will you tell me again, that I am showing the *French* what they should do? I remember in the Abundance of your Spleen, you gave that Honour to my Judgment once in the Affair of *Portugal* — And where what I predicted prov'd too true — But the Jest upon your Malice was, it was actually doing when I spoke of it, and while you saw there was no Possibility of preventing it, you rail'd at him that saw it before you, and told you where you lay open.

As to *Flanders*, if the Scheme above should be followed by the *French*, whose Force, while you have this Siege upon your Hands, are much superiour; Pray, bear Witness, Gentlemen, I told you of it in publick, and you know it as soon as the *French*. As to Me, I am not Politician enough to have the *French* take their Measures from such a wild Relation as mine, but in short the Case is to me very plain, and I would prepare you to expect it.

The *French* Army, if joyn'd, are so superiour to that Army the Duke of *Marlborough* commands, that as he has the Siege to cover, and fewer Troops by 20000 Men, we ought not to expect a Fight, unless the *French* attack him, which I dare say, they will not easily be brought to do — If they divide as above, I think it is out of Question, that the Duke of *Marlborough* will and must go back to defend the Contravallations of the Camp; but that, at the same time, the Duke can do this, and yet protect the open unfortified Country of *Brabant*, and the Great and not to be defended Towns of *Brussels*, *Lovain*, *Antwerp*, *Machlin*, and the like; That this can be done at the same time, I dare not warrant, and would prepare the World not to expect it. If the Duke should do it — It must be allow'd, he will do as great an Action as ever has been done since the Relief of *Paris* by the Duke of *Parma*, or the Covering the City of *Nuremberg* by *Gustavus Adolphus*, which I take to be two of the greatest and nicest Actions of these latter Ages of the World.

In the first the Duke of Parma with less than 20000 Men reliev'd *Paris*, besieg'd by the King of *Navarre*, after the Great Henry IV. whose Army was 40000 Men, yet the Spaniards retreated in View of his Army without Fighting; in the other, the Great K. of *Sweden* with but 17000 Men protected *Nuremberg* from being besieg'd by Count *Walestein* with 70000 Men, and yet neither would he come out and fight, nor durst the *Germans* attack him as he lay, nor at last could they hinder his marching away to join other Troops, which he had coming to his Assistance, by which in their Turn they were forced to fortifie, lest he should attack them.

But in the Case before us, I would prepare our People to expect the worst——*Lisle* is besieg'd, *Lisle* MUST be taken, whatever it cost; whatever the *French* are permitted to do elsewhere, *Lisle* MUST be taken, and *Lisle* with its Consequences must pay for all—and IT WILL pay for all;

Let us not be uneasy, it is the KEY of *France* on that side; he has no more great Towns in the Way, he has no more Barriers, we must enter *France* if once *Lisle* be but taken. To expect to be able to prevent the *French* doing any thing any where, is to expect impracticable Things, and to prepare only to have something to cavil at and complain of, according to the late laudable Custom of finding Fault with every Action, let it be how it will——The *French* have a great Army, and especially a great Superiority of Horse; while your Hands are ty'd with a vigorous Siege, and 40000 Men taken up there, you cannot expect, but they will do some little Mischiefs in the open Country——But be easie, and depend upon it, they can do nothing by Way of Equivalent for the Loss of *LISLE*; Nothing for which you will think it worth while to break up that Siege, or Nothing which will give them an Opportunity to raise it.

MISCELLANEA.

I Gave you in our former the Libel against, and Answer of the *Jacobite* Clergy in *Scotland* in March last, concerning taking the Oaths, &c.——I am to ask the Reader's Pardon for giving these Things so much less, but the Length of these Papers would permit no other——And those that collect the Volunteers will be at no Loss, when they come to lie together.

It may be observ'd, that the Invasion going off, and *Scotland* appearing, as we hope, a little securer, these Gentlemen were let alone, and the Sentence no farther executed than in the pronouncing it as before; They refus'd to take the Oaths, or pray for the Queen, and indeed should they do it, most part of their Hearers would desert them; and therefore the Magistrates shut up their Meeting-Houses, but contented themselves with the past Proceedings against their Persons.

But about the Beginning of *July* last, the Gentlemen thinking the publick Hurries a little over, and that the Government would not be so wakeful in this Matter, and finding their Party not much lessen'd or discourag'd by the late Affair——(and indeed while we consider the Countenance lately given them by all Parties, to the Surprise of good Men on both sides, no other could be expected); Encourag'd I say by this——And some other Causes concurring, which I wave for the present, but may give a farther Account of hereafter; they began to open their Meeting-Houses again, and to preach and exercise their Ministerial Office as usual.

And the Reader is to observe all this while, that still they neither took the Oaths, or pray'd for the Queen——Several of them pray'd thus, for the QUEEN in general, others for the SOVEREIGN, others for